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Amerika-Schweizer suchen die Spuren ihrer Vorfahren

nz. In der zweiten Hälfte des letzten und auch noch anfangs des 20. Jahrhunderts verlockte das «Land der unbegrenzten Möglichkeiten» viele Europäer zum Auswandern. Einerseits vermochte besonders in den Bergen der knappe, magere Boden seine Bewohner nicht mehr zu ernähren, da zahlreiche Familien sehr kinderreich waren, andererseits schoben die Behörden missliebige Personen, die ihnen aus irgendwelchen Gründen nicht passten, ab.

waren im ganzen 170 Personen, 40 Amerikaner, 40 ehemals nach Russland ausgewanderte Glieder der Familie und 90 Schweizer, die sich hier als Verwandte zum Teil erstmals trafen. Ein in der Schweiz studierender Angehöriger hatte die Zusammenkunft organisiert.

Die Gruppe hat übrigens bereits Beachtung gefunden. In Bern findet eine Ausstellung statt, und das Fernsehen wird den Gästen aus den USA eine kurze Sendung widmen.

Swiss Paper Writes of Family

These are the 35 members of the John Kunz family from Idaho and Utah, who traveled to Bern, Switzerland, for a reunion with family members there. Seated third from left is 73-year-old George Kunz, Bern, whose trips to Switzerland last year inspired the enlarged gathering this fall. He is holding the brass cowbell with embroidered yoke presented to the American family members by their Swiss relatives. Senior member of the family is Hilda Kunz, 78, second row, first on right, who was accompanied to Switzerland by six of her daughters. Pocattellans in the

group were Denzil and Verda Kunz, third row, third and fourth; Dan and Ellen Kunz, fourth row, third and fourth; Chris and Brenda Kunz, back row, first and second. Chris and Dr. Neil Kunz, Rexburg dentist, (fourth row beside Dan Kunz), both served

LDS Missions in Switzerland. The Kunz reunion caught the attention of the press in Switzerland with stories like the above and pictures being featured in "Oberlaendisches Volksblatt" of Interlaken and the "Berner Nachrichten" of Munsingen (Canton Bern.)

the great-grandfather and grandfather of Pocattello's Dan and Denzil Kunz came to Idaho from their native Bern, Switzerland. The Swiss father and son had been sent to this country by the LDS Church to put their cheese making skills to use. That was in 1872, and they started a town named after their native Bern.

Now some 106 years later there are many descendants of John Kunz II and III throughout Idaho and Utah. Today only four of the children of John Kunz III are living, three of them in the Montpelier-Bern area.

Fourteen months ago 73-year-old George Kunz, who lives in Bern, Idaho, traveled to Switzerland with a daughter to meet a granddaughter, who had been serving an LDS Mission there. When he was showing the pictures and playing the tapes of the trip to Pocattello's Dan Kunz, who recently retired as manager of Blocks, the two decided it would be a good idea to get a large group of family members together to go to Switzerland. A family member, who has been studying there for some years, was available to act as a guide.

That initial idea resulted in 35 family members, ranging in ages from 20 to 78, being at the Salt Lake City Airport on Sept. 20 to make the 16-day trip together. The Pocattellans included Dan and Denzil and their wives and Chris Kunz and his wife.

The trip to Zurich was highlighted by a 73rd birthday celebration for the originator of the family reunion, George Kunz. He was presented a cake and bottle of champagne as "Happy Birthday" was sung to him by the stewardesses.

In Switzerland the reunion involved not only the American delegation and the 90 descendants of the family still in that country but also some 40 descendants of the Russian portion of the family. When the Kunz father and son came to Idaho, two other brothers immigrated to Russia, where the family remained until the start of World War II. The Swiss press dubbed the reunion "a summit conference between the USA and USSR."

The American Kunzes were housed together in a Chalet Swiss, which at one time was the private home of government officials and was described as just the right size to take care of that group. The Idahoans and Utahns were favorites with reporters for the Swiss papers.